

**Testimony of Susan Eastwood  
CGA Environment Committee  
February 9, 2020**

**In support of S.B. 837,**

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF PERFLUOROALKYL OR POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES IN CLASS B  
FIREFIGHTING FOAM,**

**and for**

**H.B. 6386, AN ACT CONCERNING EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR TIRES, SMOKE  
DETECTORS AND CERTAIN GAS CYLINDERS,**

**and**

**S.B. 839, AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS AND PESTICIDE REGULATION IN THE STATE,  
and**

**H.J. 53, RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE ADOPTION OF THE LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN.**

Dear Honored Co-Chairs Senator Cohen and Representative Borer, and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee,

**I urge your support of S.B. 837**, a bill intended to prohibit the use of perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) in firefighting foams and develop a take-back program for such products.

I strongly support this bill but would like to see **shorter implementation timelines for both the training and the full ban** given the urgency of the problem. Other states and countries are already using safe and effective alternatives.

We all know about the tragic accident when thousands of gallons of firefighting foam laden with PFAS were spilled into the Farmington River. Multiply this exponentially by all the firefighting trainings and petroleum-based fuel fires where this foam has been used for decades, all across Connecticut and the U.S. I hope this has convinced us of the need to prioritize protecting our health and environment from this class of chemicals.

As an advocate for clean water and air, I am deeply concerned about the impacts of perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) on our environment and on our public health. PFAS is a class of human-made “forever chemicals” that are persistent, do not break down in the environment, and are linked to kidney, testicular and liver cancers, reproductive disorders, infertility, low birth weights, thyroid disruption, asthma, increases in cholesterol, and resistance to vaccines in children. Because they are persistent, they get into groundwater and contaminate drinking water sources and are extremely difficult to clean up ([https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/investigations/hoosick/docs/pfoa\\_blood\\_sampling\\_q\\_and\\_a\\_9\\_2\\_1\\_6.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/investigations/hoosick/docs/pfoa_blood_sampling_q_and_a_9_2_1_6.pdf)). This class of chemicals is now found in the blood of most Americans at low levels, and an estimated 110 million Americans have been exposed at levels above “safe” standards. This has become a public health and environmental crisis!

Clean water is essential to our health, our environment and our economy. As a homeowner with a private well, I was alarmed to read reports of PFAS found in Greenwich wells (<https://greenwichfreepress.com/news/real-estate/residents-ask-tough-questions-on-pfas-contamination-of-well-water-106356/>) and in water supplies all over the country. PFAS pollution has been documented at 1,398 sites in 49 states, including Connecticut (including industrial plants, military bases, airports and fire training sites) and in the tap water of millions of people in the United States (<https://www.northeastern.edu/environmentalhealth/2018/04/19/mapping-the-expanding-pfas-crisis/>).

Significant sources of PFAS chemicals include firefighting foam, food packaging and food service ware. PFAS firefighting foam is used at factories, military bases or airports and can contaminate soil and groundwater. However, safer, effective fluoride-free foams are available and are used around the world. The U.S. is behind but there are some positive developments. Chemical manufacturer Dupont plans to phase out PFAS foams at their refineries, after hiding the health impacts of water pollution around their plants that was caused by this class of chemicals, as seen in the recent film "Dark Waters".

Without strong federal regulations, states are taking the lead. Washington, Colorado and New Hampshire have banned the use of PFAS in firefighting foam. Connecticut should join these efforts to protect our citizens and our drinking water.

**I urge you to pass S.B. 837** this session to prohibit the use of PFAS in firefighting foams and develop a take-back program for such products. Please move the implementation dates forward, if possible.

I would also like to note my support for **H.B. 6386**, AN ACT CONCERNING EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR TIRES, SMOKE DETECTORS AND CERTAIN GAS CYLINDERS, **S.B. 839**, AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS AND PESTICIDE REGULATION IN THE STATE, and **H.J. 53**, RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE ADOPTION OF THE LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN.

**H.B. 6386**, AN ACT CONCERNING EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR TIRES, SMOKE DETECTORS AND CERTAIN GAS CYLINDERS

This bill would require reports on best practices for recycling or take back of three classes of products with an emphasis on the responsibilities of the manufacturers to address the end-of-life of their products. I support full-scale collection programs for all these products, to be put in place upon passage of the bill, rather than studies, which will delay progress on three categories of products that are difficult and burdensome to community disposal programs.

Recycling or disposal of tires is a particularly complicated issue because they are bulky and release toxic chemicals into the environment. Current reuse, such as for crumb rubber, have been shown to spread these toxic chemicals far and wide, and when used as fill for artificial turf, they can endanger our children. Burning can release toxins into the air. This bill should add language to specify environmentally responsible practices for recycling and reuse of tires, or at least specify unacceptable methods.

**S.B. 839**, AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS AND PESTICIDE REGULATION IN THE STATE

This bill would require DEEP to move from paper filing for pesticide registration for both applicator certification and product certification. It is based on CEQ recommendations on modernizing pesticide

enforcement, and it stands to reason that electronic records would simplify certification processes and make them more transparent.

**H.J. 53, RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE ADOPTION OF THE LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN.**

I would also like to voice my support for adoption of the Long Island Sound Blue Plan, a resource that provides guidance and a collaborative vision for the future of Long Island Sound. This plan will help the public, regulators, and developers to make good decisions about the Sound and will promote communication between project proponents and existing users. Years in the making, it is time to move this well-considered plan forward.

Thank you for your work to make Connecticut a safe and healthy place to live and work.

Sincerely,

Susan Eastwood  
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